

Kindly amend Claim 12 as follows:

Sub B2
A3

12. (Amended) A process for fabricating an integrated circuit, comprising:

- forming an active device on a semiconductor substrate;
- forming a contact opening in a dielectric deposited on said active device, said contact opening in electrical contact with said active device;
- depositing by physical vapor deposition a barrier layer in said contact opening and on at least a portion of said semiconductor substrate;
- depositing a contact metal on said barrier layer within said contact opening;
- removing a substantial portion of said contact metal and said barrier layer from said semiconductor substrate [and forming] to form a contact plug within said contact opening; and
- subjecting said contact plug to a temperature sufficient to anneal said barrier layer.

Kindly cancel Claim 13 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Kindly add Claim 24 as follows:

Sub B3
A4
Cmt

24. A process for fabricating a contact in a semiconductor substrate having a contact opening formed therein, comprising:

- depositing a barrier layer in said contact opening and on at least a portion of said semiconductor substrate;
- depositing a contact metal on said barrier layer within said contact opening;
- removing a substantial portion of said contact metal and said barrier layer from said semiconductor substrate to form a contact plug within said contact opening; and